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ABSTRACT

This Fifth Report of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education examines those forces which have prevented the adoption of some of the recommendations of the previous four reports. In posing the question--Is anyone listening to the voices of the people?--the Council implores national educational policy makers to join in the full implementation of a viable educational program to provide for the full economic development of the nation's human resources. This document is a copy of the report submitted to the Honorable Elliot Richardson, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. (JS)

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Fifth Report

National Advisory Council on Vocational Education

Vocational Education Amendments of 1968
Public Law 90-576

VT013718

June 21, 1971

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The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education was created by the Congress through the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. It is composed of 21 persons, appointed by the President from diverse backgrounds in labor, management and education. It is charged by law to advise the Commissioner of Education concerning the operation of vocational education programs, make recommendations concerning such programs, and make annual reports to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare for transmittal to Congress.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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LAWRENCE DAVENPORT
Chairman

CALVIN DELLEFIELD
Executive Director

June 21, 1971

Honorable Elliot Richardson
Secretary
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education is pleased to submit this, our Fifth Report, in support of the Administration's positive stance toward career education.

As we understand the history of vocational education in our nation, Commissioner Sidney P. Marland is the first chief administrator at the Office of Education to identify career education as the Number One priority in Education. We believe Vocational and Technical Education is an important part of this concept.

In this report we have attempted to recognize the various publics needing career education and have urged the policy makers in your department to assist the Commissioner in attaining his goal.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Davenport

Lawrence Davenport
Chairman

Enclosure

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FIFTH REPORT

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The values most Americans hold dear include that each man living under equality of opportunity should work at a job of his choice within the limits of his ability, and that economic well-being is indispensable to the freedom and dignity of the individual.

In its first four reports, the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education dealt with some of the reasons that our present educational system has failed us in achieving these goals. They dealt with the following major items in depth:

Report 1 - Dealt with the national attitude toward vocational education as a system designed for someone else's child.

Report 2 - Dealt with the approach of federal funding to reduce the flow of untrained manpower into the pool of unemployment.

Report 3 - Dealt with employment as an integral part of education.

Report 4 - Dealt with the problems involved in local support, state plans, the lack of federal initiative and the need for effective national planning for vocational education.

In this, our Fifth Report, the Council wishes to examine those forces which have prevented the adoption of some of the recommendations of the first four reports. While the mood of the National Advisory Council today is one of impatience, the Council senses the mood of the public as punitive.

Since the Council represents various publics, the question is being asked: Is anybody listening to the voices of the people --? Is anybody listening to:

* The forty million elementary school children who need career orientation.

* The seven and one-half million young people who seek employment after graduation.

* The seven hundred and fifty thousand high school and college students who drop out each year, virtually all without marketable skills.

* The unemployed, or soon to be unemployed, workers not expecting callback because of shifts in technology or shifts in labor market demand.

* The highly motivated working poor stuck in low-skill, low-paying jobs, who need to hold two jobs to earn enough income to cover their family needs.

* The mothers of school age children who need and want to re-enter the labor market.

* The older workers involuntarily retired who want to continue to work, but need a marketable skill.

* The over three hundred thousand mental hospital patients discharged every year who need a marketable skill to sustain themselves.

* The over two million veterans returning to civilian life.

* The inmates in our prisons who need pre- and post-release skill training to cut down on the high rate of recidivism.

* The disadvantaged and handicapped.

* The reports from the State Advisory Councils on Vocational Education.

* The taxpayer as he votes down bond issue after bond issue on his local educational level.

IS ANYBODY REALLY LISTENING? WE DO NOT THINK SO!

There is an "educational" consumer revolt developing in our land today. The public's limit of tolerance has been reached and they are on the verge of wresting control of the delivery of educational services from the managers of public education. Public officials responsible for education, both elected and appointed, need to be reminded of Alexander Hamilton's statement, "Here, sir, the people govern!"

Like the general public, we must ask, "Why is our educational system not responsive to the demands of our society?" Since 1917, Congress has registered its concern through legislation for the need to infuse vocational education into the spectrum of educational opportunities. The most recent congressional action being the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. Whenever public officials -- the governors, the state legislators, the congressmen, the mayors -- seek elective office, they usually embrace the concept of sound vocational education programs. It is one subject about which there is no controversy. In view of this overwhelming demand, the National Advisory Council must ask why do the managers of our educational system continue to be so maladroit in implementing a policy which would effect positive change and meet the demands of the people.

Historically, various educational leaders have written

volumes which are replete with utterances advocating the implementation of career education programs.

Tne present Commissioner of Education has endorsed strongly the concept of career education. The Council is anxious to assist him in the development of a strong program in vocational and technical education as part of career education.

We ask the question, with all of this endorsement, where has vocational and technical education been?

* On the list of budgetary priorities? --AT THE BOTTOM.
* On the organizational chart of U.S.O.E.? --AT THE BOTTOM.
* In the legislative goals of those advising the decision makers of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare? -- AT THE BOTTOM.

The Council has been reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the reason for the general educational system being kept bankrupt with respect to vocational education, is that the advisors to the educational policy makers have failed to provide the leadership and insight necessary to achieve the educational goals the people of our country demand.

Who are the keepers of the keys of the educational policy making establishment?

* Leaders from the prestige universities.

* Professional associations.
* Educational associations.
* Decision makers of educational policy at the state and local level.
* The general educationally oriented bureaucrats.

We implore these influential decision makers to join the Commissioner in the active reorientation of our educational system to embrace the concept of a totally articulated vocational and technical education thrust.

To insure the intent of the people, the Congress, and the host of supporters of vocational and technical education, the Council recommends that programs in vocational and technical education continue to be legislated. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare must continue to be held accountable by the Congress under the law. Any new legislation must guarantee that vocational and technical education has parity in the organizational structure of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

An initial step in the implementation of this parity within the educational structure is the establishment of an Office responsible for vocational and technical education within the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to advance the Commissioner's stated goals for career education as a national policy. This Office should be charged with the responsibility of keeping such programs at the highest national priority in education. The Office

should be headed by a person who is eminently well qualified in the fields of vocational and technical education as a part of career education and be accorded the rank of Assistant Secretary. He must have an adequate supportive staff to enable the Office to function effectively. The establishment of this Office with the appropriate level of leadership will provide visibility and continuity in addition to decision making responsibility on behalf of vocational and technical education at the top levels of education and government.

We urge Congress to accept the responsibility of appropriating the full authorizations that have been provided for down through the years for vocational and technical education. Funds must be provided for full implementation immediately, as well as providing the necessary funds for future needs.

The vast majority of the public in our nation live by a familiar vision of our public schools. They believe our schools have traditionally fulfilled a dual function--preparing young people for a career in adult life and serving as transmitters of our cultural heritage.

The Council implores our national educational policy makers to join in the full implementation of a viable educational program to provide for the full economic development of our human resources. To do anything less is to abandon positive educational leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Davenport

Lawrence Davenport, Chairman

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June 21, 1971